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535 When the masked dancers are out there just for the good time of the people, it
522 isn't necessary to have a clown with each set of dancers. Sometimes the shaman doesn't even paint a clown. He doesn't worry about it. If someone wants to be one, all right; but he doesn't ask anyone to do it. If someone wants to, he says, "All right, get your own equipment then." The clown is not counted in the set.
[755] A man may paint four others and a clown. But when they are dancing to cure sickness, the clown is supposed to be the most important dancer. The old man told me that the clown has more power than any other masked dancer.

The clown won't talk to the people when he's dancing at the time of the puberty rite. He only motions. He's just there to make fun. The people give him directions, and he goes and does what they say and makes a fool of himself just for the fun of it. He will roll on the ground if they tell him to. He dances all over. He may be in the lead or he may come last. He has no special position. It is not dangerous to touch a clown as it is to touch another masked dancer.

535 The clown is the servant and messenger of the masked dancers. You notice
522 that he runs over to the group of men who are singing for the dancers and bends
203 down and says something. He is saying, "The dancers out there [resting in the woods] want to smoke and they need tobacco," or, "They want you to sing a 'high-step' dance song for them."

If you are a masked dancer, you can tell the clown to deliver a message for you. He goes among the people; it's all right for him to do it. People are all saying, "There's the clown. What is he after?" He gets near your man. Then he leans over quickly and delivers your message. And he's gone like a flash.

When I was a dancer, I used the clown. The girl I sent a message to is still living here. Just as we were going out from the fire I motioned to the clown, and he followed me. I told him, "See that girl by the wood pile. Tell her that I want to see her over here when the next dance begins." Pretty soon I saw the clown going toward that wood pile. He talked to my girl.

The next time they danced, I didn't go in. I went to the place where I was going to meet the girl. I had my mask on, and people I met couldn't see who I was. I was waiting there. Pretty soon I saw a girl coming. I jingled my costume to let her know I was there.[6]

535 To continue with the account of the preparation of the masked dancers. The men who are to dance, strip, don the kilts and moc-
[756] casins, and stand or sit facing the east. The shaman puffs a pre-
[782] liminary cigarette to the directions while he recites an extemporaneous prayer such as this:

Under the heavens to the east, inside Big Star Mountain, can be seen the great Black Mountain Spirit. His body has been designed and the uprights of his

[6] It is dangerous to touch, speak to, or point at a masked dancer only when he is dancing or actually impersonating a supernatural.

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Sometimes these affairs become a testing-ground for love and result in stable union. Such a case is the one cited below, where social dancing acted as a shield for a sexual adventure. The individuals involved have been happily married for many years now: 836 581

When I danced with her, I'd say, "What are we fooling around here for? We could be by ourselves." The next time she'd pull my sleeve, and we'd dance a little. Then I'd say, "Let's go." I'd go one way, and she'd go the other. We'd meet at a certain place.

Many problems arise when premarital sex relations result in pregnancy, especially if the man involved flees, denies responsibility, or is considered undesirable. The girl's kinsmen can no longer demand generous marriage gifts and will be relieved to find a man who will agree to support another's child. If a husband cannot be found for the girl prior to the birth of her baby, the public nature of the scandal and the necessity of provision for the child raise further issues. Therefore, resort is sometimes made to abortion, and illegitimate children are occasionally abandoned or destroyed at birth. 836 848 [583] [847]

Herbalists give decoctions said to promote abortion. "There is a medicine used. You have to hire someone who knows how to make and use it." Mechanical means are also attempted: 847 [759]

They try to bring about abortion by pressing themselves over a sharp stick or stump, or by getting someone to press the stomach in a certain way. It was practiced in the old days, and it is practiced now. News of it always leaks out, though it is practiced in secret. [198] [203]

To perform abortion they press and massage the stomach. The girl shouldn't have anything to eat for several days.

Of the fate of an unwanted illegitimate child the following suspicion was voiced: "A certain man's daughter was in trouble a while back. She's just a young girl. They say her baby was born dead, but I think she killed it, or her relatives killed it in some way." 848 [847]

When illegitimate children are not disposed of, however, they are treated kindly. "Illegitimate children are often kept, and such a child is not discriminated against. It lessens a woman's [581]

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606 the same time. Often a man has to duck away or go out the back way before a crowd of people when his mother-in-law comes. They keep it up today and have to be just as careful, although it is sometimes even harder now.

596 606 602 [203] The husband is always conscious of the wishes and attitudes of the affinal relatives he never sees; "the man is ruled by them." Using his wife as messenger, they send him orders and hints of praise or censure. They know as much about his activities as if they shared his household, and he is correspondingly sensitive to their reactions. Said one man: "I know that if I had trouble with my wife, my father-in-law would stick up for her. Your father-in-law tells you to do something, and if you don't do it, you have your wife on your hands, scolding all the time." [593]

606 203 596 A common device of the parents-in-law for communicating directions is to tell their daughter what they want done when they know her husband is within hearing. Once a man with whom I was working paused to tell his daughter that he wanted some rocks, which he considered a hazard to his home, removed. No mention of who should do the work was made. But the implications were clear, and the next day the son-in-law was busy at the task. Soon after, the older man discussed the state of the woodpile in the same impersonal vein, and the following day the son-in-law was chopping wood.

606 203 Much oblique communication passes between avoidance affinities when a situation warrants it:

You can't see your mother-in-law, but that doesn't mean that you don't think a great deal of her. Very likely she's the one you count on most in your wife's family. If you and your wife have trouble, maybe your mother-in-law will stand out of sight and pretend to be talking to the baby or someone else, and she will talk with you and try to settle the trouble you have been having. If she has stood up for you in this way, probably, even if you separate from your wife, you will continue to bring your mother-in-law food and things because you like her. [593] [586]

606 203 521 Sometimes the pretense of indirect discourse is dropped and an actual conversation between the two avoidance affinities takes place:

In cases of emergency, or if you have wronged your wife, your mother-in-law may approach near enough to speak to you. She usually comes at night, but if she comes during the day, she must be behind some object so that you cannot see her face.

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Then, too, you may have to go and talk to her about important things. If you are separated from your wife and you trust your mother-in-law, you may get the help of somebody at your mother-in-law's camp to see that she is safely inside so you won't run into her. Then, standing outside, you may talk to her.

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The father-in-law, too, may find it necessary to state his views directly:

I talked to that boy, her husband. I said, "I'm talking to you. This day means something. It shouldn't be wasted. This day means something to everybody. Every day means that you should bring in something to eat. Make it count; work and make something. If you have nothing to eat, your wife cannot cook anything for you. It's not your place to be angry at your wife because you don't have anything to eat. Look at her clothes. Many things rest on you. It's the man's duty to bring in the meat and clothes. You can't expect the woman to do that."

I said, "My daughter, it is your place to keep house. Keep everything neat about your place. Keep yourself neat the way you were when I was raising you. Wear good clothes. Keep your husband's clothes clean. Keep your fire going all the time. Quit running around nights and doing things as though you were single. Don't fuss at each other."

And I said to the boy, "A woman must be treated well because she feeds you; she's the only friend you have. Your mother and father can't treat you better than your wife does. That's the way I feel about my wife." I told him, "She's the mother of the whole thing, this life you have to go through, and you may have a long life."

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When quarrels arise among a man's affinal relatives, it is to his advantage to be as neutral as possible, so that his relatives-in-law, and particularly his wife's parents, will not condemn him for intrusion into their affairs.

Now there's trouble at my place. My wife's stepmother told her that a cousin said something about her. So my wife hasn't gone over to visit that cousin for a long time. The cousin sees me and asks me why, but I make excuses and never say. But then my wife met this cousin and told her the truth. The next day this cousin came over to the stepmother and asked, "Did you tell that woman I said so-and-so?" The stepmother said, "No." So now the cousin says my wife made it all up. I thought it best to let my father-in-law know that I'm not taking sides, that I'm only an in-law here. He says that it's all right, he does not hold it against me. It's the nature of women, and we shouldn't bother about it, he says.

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But it would be superficial to infer that the husband is constantly tyrannized by his avoidance affinities. They would be ill advised, indeed, to drive to divorce a man who is discharging